

Remarks

The Applicants have amended the Specification to correct minor typographical errors and to better direct the reader's attention to certain ones of the drawings.

The Applicants have also amended the independent claims to recite that at least one of the support members is directly under one of the dividers/partitions. This is readily seen in various of the drawings, including Fig. 5.

The Applicants acknowledge the rejection of Claims 1 – 3, 7 – 13 and 15 – 20 under 35 U.S.C. §103 over Black or Bendel. The Applicants respectfully submit that neither reference is applicable.

Black discloses a filter-cleaning apparatus having a plurality of compartments with a media support surface 105 separated by a plurality of partitions 117. Black also discloses support members 119 that hold the media support surface 105 at a prescribed distance from the filter bottom. The support members 119 are juxtaposed relative to the partitions 117.

In sharp contrast, Claims 1 – 3, 7 – 13 and 15 – 20 specifically recite that at least one of the support members is directly under one of the dividers/partitions. Black nowhere discloses, teaches or suggests this.

Bendel discloses a gravity filtering device having a plurality of compartments with a bottom 5 separated by partitions 14. In that case, there are no support members that are positioned directly under the partitions 14. In fact, it does not appear as if there are any support members at all in Bendel. Accordingly, Bendel fails to disclose, teach or suggest the specifically recited language wherein at least one of the support members is directly under the dividers/partitions.

As a consequence of the utter failure of both Black and Bendel to disclose, teach or suggest at least one support member directly under at least one of the dividers/partitions, the Applicants

respectfully submit that those publications are inapplicable to Claims 1 – 3, 7 – 13 and 15 – 20.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

The Applicants acknowledge the rejections of Claims 4, 5, 6 and 14 under 35 U.S.C. §103 over the hypothetical combination of Savage with Black or Bendel. The Applicants respectfully submit that hypothetically combining Savage with Black or Bendel fails to cure the deficiencies set forth above with respect to Black and Bendel. Accordingly, even if one of ordinary skill in the art were to make the hypothetical combination as set forth in the Official Action, the resulting structure/methodology would still fail to teach or suggest the subject matter of Claims 4, 5, 6 and 14.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

In light of the foregoing, the Applicants respectfully submit that the entire Application is now in condition for allowance, which is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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